



PRISCILLA WOULD BE PROUD: This year's Speak for Thyself award winners: Duxbury Council on Aging Director Joanne Moore, Dorothea "Dolly" Snow-Bicknell, Senate President Therese Murray, and Tania Cooper Patriota.

Exceptional women honored

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The four women honored at Saturday's Speak for Thyself awards were all connected by a common theme of giving back.

The award ceremony, which took place at the Duxbury Senior Center, is an annual tradition that honors the spirit of Priscilla Mullins Alden, who in Longfellow's poem "The Courtship of Myles Standish" famously told

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her suitor, John Alden, "speak for thyself John."

The event is sponsored by the Alden Kindred, descendants of John and Priscilla who are still active in the community today.

On Saturday the award was given to four women, who were all in attendance at the Senior Center. Tania Cooper Patriota is the United Nations Population Fund representative to Haiti, where she works, promoting women's health. Therese Murray is president of the Massachusetts Senate. Dorothy Bicknell is the president of Project Gurnet & Bug Light and Joanne Moore is the Director of the Duxbury Council on Aging.

Emcee Jim Fagan praised all the women for their dedication to their respective communities, repeating one of his favorite quotes: "We make a living by what we earn but we make a life by what we do."

Jim Baker of the Alden Kindred also thanked the evening's honorees.

"Thank you for speaking out and providing all the work that you do," he said.

Patriota, who is married to the Brazilian ambassador and has ties to Plymouth and the Alden Kindred, talked about her work promoting safe moth-



John Kemp of the group Penny Merriment and Alden "Rink" Ringquist get into the Pilgrim mood before the Speak for Thyself awards at the Senior Center on Saturday.

erhood in Haiti, where there is a high rate of mortality during birth.

"My current assignment is the most challenging of all," she said. "It's been an uphill struggle but it's also been a most gratifying experience."

Murray's introduction from Fagan was short but sweet.

"I have no use for politicians, but Terry I am in awe of," he said, eliciting a chuckle from the crowd. "She's at the Statehouse daily, she's on the news nightly, and she still finds time to remember her roots."

Murray talked about her

own work with orphanages in Russia, and talked about her own upbringing.

"We were brought up to believe we could do anything we wanted to do," she said. "It's true, everybody can make a difference."

Alden "Rink" Ringquist had high praise for Duxbury's Dorothy "Dolly" Bicknell, a tireless fundraiser and former tennis champion who has worked to help restore the historic lighthouses in Duxbury.

"She has done a phenomenal job and is a great person to work for," Ringquist said.

The last honoree of the evening was Moore, who was also the host at the senior center.

"If you know what goes on here, it's unbelievable," said Ringquist.

Moore was visibly moved by the honor.

"This award is special because it's about women and the many roles we play," she said.

Throughout the evening, the women being honored were aware of the history of the award and the woman for whom it was named.

"Working to improve the lives of women ... If Priscilla Mullins was around, I think she would approve," said Patriota.



STRONG VOICES: Speak for Thyself honoree Therese Murray, who is president of the Massachusetts Senate, is congratulated at Saturday's awards dinner by Duxbury's state representative Tom Calter.



COA Director Joanne Moore and Alden "Rink" Ringquist during the award ceremony.



Jim Fagan presents the Speak for Thyself award to Tania Cooper Patriota.

The members of Penny Merriment serenade the crowd with a traditional Pilgrim drinking song.

